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French the story is given a lighter turn by the introduction of a "deus ex machina," but in the German fate is inexorable and the hero pays with his life the penalty of his broken vow.

From the two stories, it is evident, that the motive which we are discussing is the "leit-motif." It is also plain that the sequence of events in both versions is the same. If now, we turn to the texts, we find that the transition from the "leit-motif" to what may be called the catastrophe motif is made at precisely the same point in the story and, as it happens, with a verbal coincidence.

The hero's magnificence and liberality have just been described and the story goes on to say that whenever he desired, he might enjoy the presence of his mistress.

French, 217.

"Mult ot Lanval joie e deduit  
u seit par jur u seit par nuit;  
s'amie puet veoir sovent,  
tute est a sun comandement."

German, 610-617.

und swa der degen milte  
in der witen welt hin kan,  
wolt er die schoene frouwe han,  
swenn er sins wunsches nach ir pflag,  
ez were naht oder tag,  
so war sū bi im da zestund  
und tet im ganze liebe kunt  
mit libe und ouch mit guote.

Now just at this point, line 618 in German, l. 221 in French, the transition is made and the incident is described which induces the hero to break his vow.

Having called attention to this striking similarity between the introductory incidents of these two poems, it remains only to explain this likeness. The only explanation seems to be that the author of the German poem knew Marie's Lai and made use of a portion of it in the manner above indicated. If this conclusion is accepted as correct, then the statements of Schröder and Pfeiffer must be modified accordingly and Peter von Staufenberg must be added to the list of stories given by Reinhold Köhler in his "vergleichenden Anmerkungen" in Warnke's edition of Marie de France.

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## A PRIMITIVE SHORT-STORY.

The following examples of primitive story-telling are from A. Mackenzie's "Native Australian Languages," an article published in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute* (London), Vol. 3, p. 247. They present three versions of the same narrative. Nos. 1 and 2 show the shorter form of the story as told by different narrators. No. 3 is an extended version in English, by the narrator of No. 2. Both story-tellers were aboriginals, though the author of the longer version had evidently received an English education, and both were members of the Ulladulla (Southeast Australian) tribe. Since the stories in their shorter form were taken down word for word as they were told about the camp-fire, the reader must supply from his imagination a running accompaniment of lively gesture and impersonation. I have arranged the three versions in parallel columns in order to make clear the relation of the shorter forms to each other and to the legend as a whole.

In presenting these *Urquellen* I raise the question whether we have not here the crude beginnings of a distinct type (or sub-type) of prose composition, the humble progenitor of the modern Short-story.<sup>1</sup>

The essential features of the primitive Short-story, so far as they are illustrated in these specimens, appear to be as follows: (1) It is a shortened version of a narrative of which the general outlines are familiar to the circle of hearers. (2) It is highly elliptical, concentrating attention sharply upon a few significant details. (3) It proceeds by a series of graduated shocks or incitements designed to stimulate progressively the imagination and memory of the hearers. (4) It moves from point to point with nervous, not to say spasmodic, rapidity. (5) Such unity as it has—and we may not expect a high degree of constructive skill at this stage of the art—is secured by the selection of a single main incident or catastrophe. (6) The filling-in is supplied (as the author of the article informs us) by actions, gestures, etc., which appeal in the most direct and vivid fashion to the sense of the listeners.

In all these respects, except one that I will note

<sup>1</sup> *Narratiuncula vera* B.-Matthewsii.

presently, the kinship of this aboriginal narrative to the modern Short-story is easily demonstrated. The modern narrative, like its foregoers, is elliptical, impressionistic, swiftly cumulative, and not infrequently (especially in those reversions to primitive types which one finds in the cheap magazines) inclined to be spasmodic. Furthermore it relies by preference upon a single main incident, and for chinking uses vivid bits of description and dialogue analogous to the savage's impersonation and gestures.

The exception mentioned above is, of course, the relation of the Short-story to the original legend. The primitive Short-story appears to be a condensation of a longer narrative, whereas the modern Short-story, we are told, is characterized by its freedom from such relationships. But in this respect also, I think, the primitive and the ultimate Short-story are at one. I do not mean that the Short-story is a condensed novel; Professor Matthews has, once for all, made that thesis untenable;

but I would maintain that the modern Short-story is drawn from, and for its validity depends upon, a literary continuum—a mass of fiction material accumulated by countless story-tellers of the past and now become part of the social consciousness of the race. The mood in which we read the modern short-story is then, not unlike that of the Australian aborigine, as the listeners to the story of Bundoola. Like him we accept the ellipses of the Short-story,—the quick, unexplained shiftings of human relationship, the leaping and dartings of the course of events, the sudden drop of the curtain while the action is in full gallop,—because we know by heart the great legend of human nature as the fiction-writers have told it time and again, and can supply for ourselves the omitted portions. Perhaps it is just because all the stories have been told—as the critics so often remind us—that the modern Short-story is able to hold its own as a distinct literary type.

#### THE STORY OF BUNDOOLA.

##### I.

Blackfellow came from southward.

##### II.

I go fishing, I am going to spear fish; my canoe, my fish-spear.

What a fine calm sea.

I'll paddle over there to the surf at

##### III.

A good while ago a blackfellow named Bundoola lived at Bundarwa, on the North arm of Jervis Bay. He was *murraori*, long and big with robust arms, like a tree with its limbs. He lived in a big cave, *yerrowa*. If anyone goes to the cave the waters of the sea will cover the place. He had with him his two wives, their four children, of which three by a former husband, and the mother of one of the wives. He did not treat the children well. He used to give them for food shark, stingaree, *kooroodthoo*, and *nijool-idjong*, the two latter fish resembling eels and stingarees. The mother used to tell the children not to eat the trash.

They came from a place called Banboro, in the mountains near Jamberoo. Bundoola used to boast to his wives of his expertness in catching fish. One morning he went out as usual in his canoe, leaving wives, mother-in-law and children in the camp.

The sea was smooth and the weather fine. He was very successful in his fishing. He had a very long fish-spear measuring about twenty feet, called *poonjerry*. He shouted to his wives to tell his mother-in-law how skilful he was. "You watch me. You

Will go and fish.

Oh, calm, very smooth! He jumped into the canoe.

You see me?

the rocks. I'll go to the bush, the sea is too rough. I'll paddle out to sea again.

Yes, we'll go, because he gives you bad fish.

We have left Bundoola.

Let us run away, because bad, nasty fish. Let us run away, children; we'll leave him when he goes out far.

He follows them.

Where are you?  
hilloa !

Hilloa ! There they are ; the Southerners.

I hear them over there. I must go thither. There they are, the Southerners.

Says he, that's our brother-in-law coming.

Fetch us a fire-stick Here !  
It has gone out.

watch me," he said. They signified assent.

The women began to talk to one another about the foolishness of remaining with a man who treated them so ill, and the favorableness of the opportunity for running away. They fled with the children and all their things. Bundoola still kept fishing and occasionally calling out to them. He heard them answering him as he thought ; but he was deceived. What he heard was the noise made by the *morat*, or two trees touching and rubbing against one another when agitated by the wind. At last having filled his canoe with fish, he thought it was time to leave off fishing and come ashore. As soon as the canoe touched the sand, he shouted to his wives to help him draw it up with its load on the beach.

The sound of the *morat*, just then repeated, made him think that his orders were attended to. At a loss, however, to account for the delay in the women's coming, he went to the camp and found it empty. He cooeeyed again, and again heard the cry of the *morat*. He followed the direction of the sound until it brought him in sight of the artifice by which he had been deceived. He was at first furious with rage, but, having picked up the tracks of the fugitives, followed the trail, weeping as he went along. The tracks led him to Burria. He carried a canoe with which to cross the river, and left it at Yalwal, where it can yet be seen fossilized. Thence he went to Kangargroon in quest of the runaways. He followed the river up to Noorunmaia. Whenever he fell in with a wallaby or paddymelon, he would imagine it was one of the party he was in search of, and call out, "stop, come to me, my children, my wife." From Noorunmaia he tracked them to Bamboro, where they were encamped with their friends. Approaching the camp, Bundoola gave the customary cooeey. The camp was all on the alert.

"Ay, Ay, here's the master, the villain, coming."

Bundoola, as usual with visitors from another tribe, sat down a little way off. His wives brought him fire and went back to the camp. He crushed out the fire, pretending that it had gone out of itself. His wives brought him a burning brand, and this time he kindled a good blaze. The women remained with him. Next morning there was

Here ! Let us go hunt.

Mine (My spear) is ready.

You stop here, because the game runs this way. There they are, there they are, Bundoola. Whizz-z-z ! Our brother-in-law has speared him. We'll take the meat over there. Let us roast the meat.

Look, look, look, brother-in-law ! Have a look at this place belonging to your wife.

Go a little closer, brother-in-law, go a little closer to the bank.

Oh dear ! My canoe and fish-spear all lying there perishing.

Here it is, brother-in-law ; you catch hold. Oh dear ! it has broken. Oh dear ! my two pronged spear and teatue javelin ! Here, brother-in-law, catch hold again. Hullo ! it has broken again, brother-in-law.

Let us go to the camp. Where is he ? I don't know.

Let us go hence to Berwera.

Let us go, let us make the spear ready ; all ready.

You are a good marksman ; you wait here, because this is the path that the kangaroo takes his road.

Let us go, brother-in-law, you'll see your wife's country. You'll see the great precipice. Bundoola's wife belongs to that place.

You come close to the edge, you stop here. They shove him over a good way ; kill him dead.

Rope, you catch hold of the rope, vine. He comes up the long way to the top.

Cut the rope, serve you right, you dead now.

This was at Banboro. I'll go home to my place, this place, is too rough. I'll go and try another place. I'll go a little farther. This is the good habitation. I'll stop here at Bundarwa.

to be a great kangaroo hunt. The women said to their relatives, "These children are nearly poisoned to death with the carrion given them to eat by their father." One of the children was Bundoola's own, a boy ; three, a boy and two girls, belonged to a man who was dead.

The tribe called to Bundoola to light the fire and make a spear for the hunt. He was not long in making a capital spear. The hunters betook themselves to a long point and killed a great many kangaroos. Bundoola distinguished himself by the distance at which he struck his game. He did not want to come nearer than three hundred yards to be sure of his mark. Fifteen kangaroos, the result of the morning's sport were put into the ovens of earth and hot stones.

After the feast his connections told him they would next day show him his wives' country, what a fine territory it was, and how well stocked with game and native honey.

During this excursion, as the party stood on the edge of a cliff, the old men gathered about Bundoola, and pushed him over the precipice. He fell a great way, but was not killed ;

so they let down a long vine for him to lay hold of, and drew him up to the top. Just as he stretched out his hand to catch hold of the summit, one of them severed the vine with an *ambuga*, and down he fell again to the bottom, this time completely crushed.

"Yenaunga, we are going away ;

You sit down there dead ; warragul<sup>1</sup> eat you, and hawk eat you, and fly eat you ; you are too much of a rogue."

Bundoola, dead, dreamt of going back to his own place. As he journeyed south, he tried the different caves in the cliffs, but found them all too diminutive for his comfort, until he got back to Bundarwa. He turned himself in his place of abode, and sat down with his arms extended, and—and there he sits petrified to this day.

<sup>1</sup> Dog.